

MILLARD COUNTY (UTAH). COUNTY COMMISSION ^[1472]

MINUTES, 1852#

DESCRIPTION: These minute books record the actions of the county commission, the governing body of the county. The commission (known during the territorial period as the county court) was authorized to manage all county business and property. This includes budgeting, equipment purchasing, and auditing; use of county lands; districting for schools, roads, voting, drainage, etc.; taxing, specifically acting as an ex-officio board of equalization; business licensing; arranging for the construction of roads, public buildings, etc.; contracting for services; supervising the conduct and payment of all county personnel; providing for basic health care, public safety, and care of the indigent; canvassing returns and appointing certain officials; and incorporating municipalities.

Following the formation of territorial government, the legislature in 1852 passed acts relating to the formation and government of counties. There were no county commissions, but the probate judge in conjunction with the county selectmen were invested "with the usual powers and jurisdiction of County Commissioners" and as such were known as the county court. The probate court clerk (also known as the county clerk) was to keep the records of the court. With statehood in 1896 an actual board of county commissioners was created. The probate judge was removed, but the selectmen continued serving as commissioners until elections were held. The county clerk remained the clerk of the board, recording the minutes. Minute entries are prefaced by date, names of those present, and where and when the board met.

The commission was authorized to manage all county business and county property. This included auditing all claims against the county and payments by the treasurer. Claims, bids, and annual budgets are a major emphasis throughout the minutes. Treasurer's reports and the financial reports of other departments also are noted. Personnel wage scales, individual salary increases, and departmental purchases are discussed and recorded. The commission levied property taxes for county purposes and by the 1880s served as a board of equalization. By the

1880s the county was authorized to borrow money and to bond, activities commonly noted at the turn-of-the-century. Tax abatements and tax sales are common entries in the 1920s and 1930s.

The county court controlled all timber and water privileges and could grant mill sites and herd grounds. The county set bounties on varmints and controlled noxious weeds. Court members created road districts and oversaw the layout of roads, a task noted throughout the minutes. They also created and oversaw irrigation districts and drainage districts. They located sites and oversaw the erection of county buildings, notably the courthouse in 1870. The granting of franchises for such things as telephones, power and gas, and railroads are noted in detail beginning in the 1900s. Lease of land and buildings to the federal government for national defense, including an internment camp at Topaz, is noted in the early 1940s.

Commissioners served as canvassers of election returns, also appointing election officers, setting the boundaries of voting precincts, and assigning polling places. The county provided for elections to incorporate towns. The county was authorized to license liquor sales in 1860, with butcher licenses added in 1865. Business licenses in general were granted by the court beginning in the 1880s. Commissioners cared for the indigent and oversaw public health and safety. This was done on an individual basis initially, but moved toward formal health and welfare departments later. The commissioners directly appointed numerous officials such as bee inspectors, health officers, registrars of vital statistics, etc. The supervision of the conduct of all county, district, and precinct officials, boards, and agencies is noted in the minutes. Loose copies of ordinances or correspondence are attached to the minutes in several of the volumes.

The second half of the first volume is Probate Court minutes. Occasional probate court business also is interspersed with the county court minutes in the first half of the volume, notably declarations of intention and naturalization oaths for citizenship.

ARRANGEMENT: The entries are arranged chronologically by date of meeting. In the first volume, early entries may be carried forward or back in the volume depending on space considerations.

RESEARCH NOTE: Labeling of volumes is inconsistent. Spine labels do not correspond to labels pasted on the front by the Historical Society. Historical Society identifiers have been placed in quotes. There are some problems with the filming. The second reel has an exceptionally long pause in the middle. Volume F is filmed in reverse, such that it may be easiest for the researcher to go to the end of the reel and rewind slowly to read the paired pages in chronological order.

Given the diversity and extent of the county commission's activities, the minute books should be consulted not only by researchers seeking information on the commission, but by those seeking information on any county agencies, their personnel, or their services to individuals;

on private contractors and their plans for work on county projects; on private businesses operating within the unincorporated county limits; and on private individuals or charitable institutions holding taxable or untaxable property within the county. Virtually any person living in, or any activity taking place in, unincorporated Millard county (up to and including the incorporation or disincorporation of municipalities) was affected by the activities of the county commission and is reflected in the minutes.

RELATED RECORDS: While the minute books summarize the meetings of the commission, many other county agencies record the particulars. Thus the other holdings of the county commission and MILLARD county agencies should be consulted. Series 83330, MINUTES INDEX, is a partial index to the second volume B. The second half of the first volume is part of MILLARD COUNTY PROBATE COURT MINUTES, series 83438.

PROCESSING NOTE: The first reel was filmed by the Utah State Archives in 1970 with the original volume returned to the county. The second reel was filmed by the LDS Genealogical Society in 1966 with the original volume retained by the county. It is unknown when and by whom volume F was filmed. The second B volume through the E volume were transferred to the State Archives by Records Analyst Pat Scott in 1988 and microfilmed in November 1996. These volumes were retained in hard copy by the Archives based on their intrinsic value. The Millard County Clerk, as clerk for the county commission, should be contacted for more recent holdings.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Box	Description	Volume
1	none	1852, Apr 24#1866, Sep 3	"A"
2	none	1866, Jul 7#1891, Mar 3	"B"
3	1	1891, Mar 3#1905, Jun 15	B
3	2	1905, Jul 3#1915, Jun 8	"D"
4	3	1916, Jan 3#1921, Jun 8	D or "D-2"
4	4	1921, Jul 5#1930, Jan 8	E
5	none	1930, Feb 4#1948, Mar 3	F